Winisk River Provincial Park

Interim Management Statement

Ontario

Ministry of Natural Resources

Hon. Vincent G. Kerrio
Minister

Mary Mogford
Deputy Minister

Winisk River Provincial Park

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Natural
Resources

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REGIONAL DIRECTORS APPROVAL STATEMENT

This Interim Management Statement will provide interim direction for the management of the Winisk River Waterway Park until a comprehensive Park Management Plan is prepared.

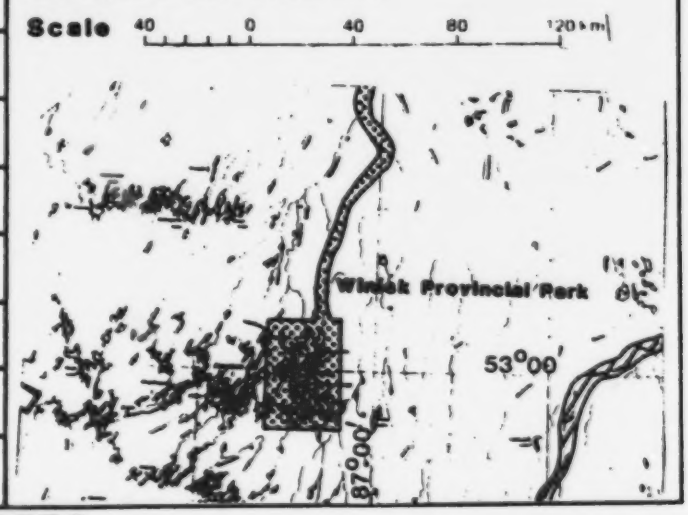
This statement will provide the basis for the subsequent preparation of the Park Management Plan.

I am pleased to approve this Interim Management Statement for the Winisk River.

G. P. Elliott
Regional Director
North Central Region

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

NAME: Winisk River Provincial Park	**REGIONAL SETTING MAP**
PROPOSED CLASS: Existing Waterway Park	
M.N.R. DISTRICT: Geraldton	
M.N.R. REGION: NCR/NR	
TOTAL AREA(ha): 160,000 **LAND:** **WATER:**	
SITE REGION: 2W	
SITE DISTRICT: 3	
DATE in REGULATION: 1969	



TARGETS

1 LIFE SCIENCE REPRESENTATION

site type/landscape unit	species/communities
Portions of Hudson Bay Lowlands, Winisk Drumlin Field and Cochrane Advance Landscape Units.	

2 EARTH SCIENCE REPRESENTATION

geological theme	feature
Island Arcs and Basins Environmental Theme Timiskaming Interstadial Drift-wood Stadial	Sachigo Subprovince Big Beaverhouse Moraine, Winisk Drumlin field Cochrane Advance features

3 CULTURAL RESOURCE REPRESENTATION

theme	theme segment
Unknown but high potential for sites see Riddle, 1982	

4 RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

day use	car camping	wilderness/back country
-	-	1800

INVENTORIES

level / type	earth science	life science	cultural	recreational	other
reconnaissance completion date	checksheet April 1979				
detailed completion date					
required?	detailed inventory		detailed inventory		

DATE _____

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

I Land Tenure

In October of 1966, the area surrounding the settlement of Webequie was set aside as the 'Winisk Wild River Indian Guide Territory.' The Winisk Wild River Park was established by Regulation in 1968. The community of Webequie, including the Ministry of Transportation and Communications airstrip located on the northern end of Eastwood Island, was withdrawn from the park in 1978 (see Map No. 1). The description of the park boundary is included in Appendix A.

Land use permits were first issued for five sites in the park in 1973, but previous to this these sites were operated as commercial tourist establishments under a letter of authority from the Ministry. Each site occupies about 0.4 hectares today.

Guidelines:

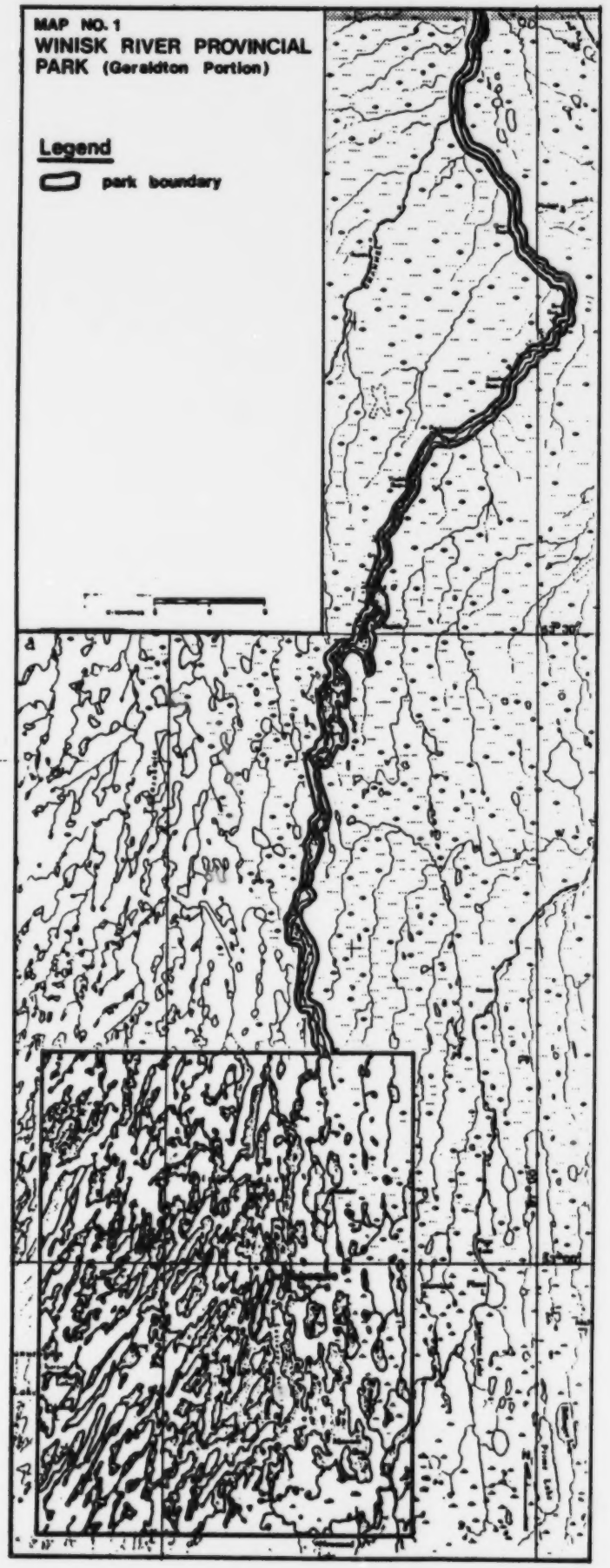
-annual renewal of the land use permits will occur;

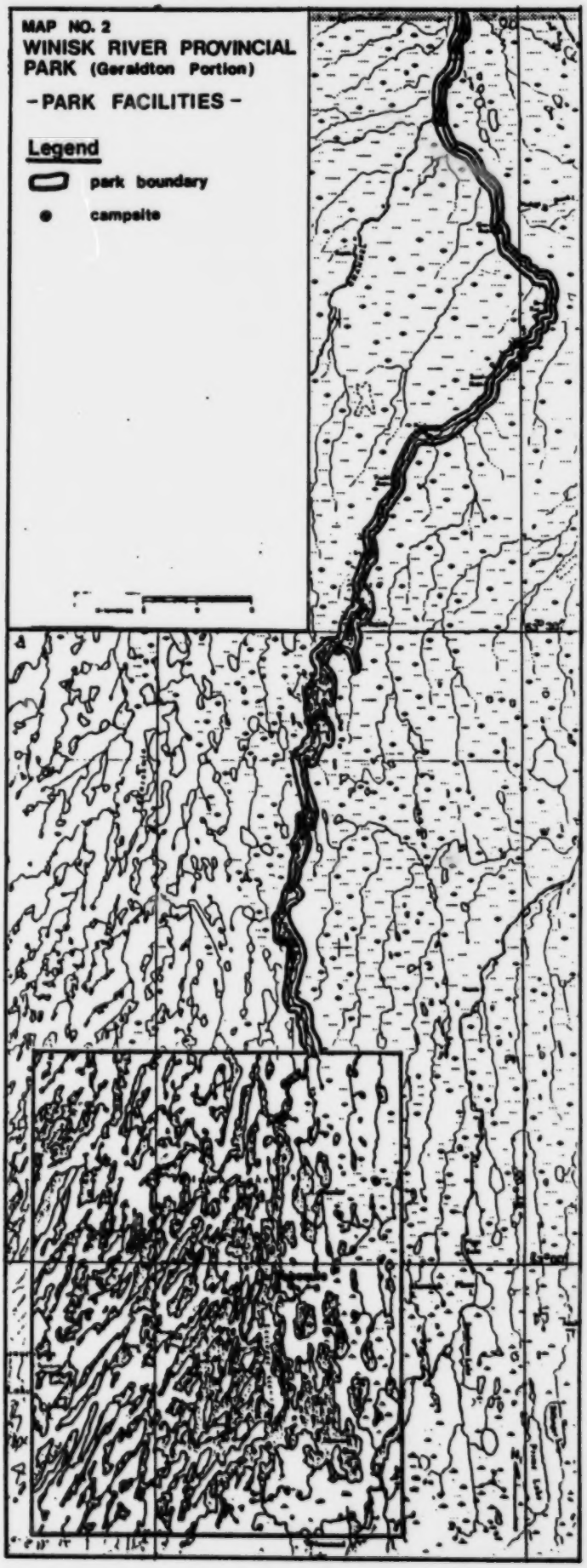
-requests from the community of Webequie for additional land area for community purposes or development will be assessed at the time they are received, and all Ministry policies and procedures will be followed;

-no further land alienation will occur within the park until completion of a management plan.

II Existing Development

The only access to Winisk River Provincial Park is by canoe, by air, to the airport at Webequie, or by float plane. Canoe trips generally start at Webequie.The map of the canoe route identifies at least 22 campsites in the Geraldton portion of the park (see Map No. 2). During July, 1978, MNR funded the school teacher at Webequie to update the canoe route information, clean some of the campsites and brush some of the portages. Since that time, no additional work has been done on this waterway park and the present condition of the facilities is unknown.


MAP NO. 1
WINISK RIVER PROVINCIAL PARK (Geraldton Portion)
Legend
park boundary


MAP NO. 2
WINISK RIVER PROVINCIAL PARK (Geraldton Portion)
-PARK FACILITIES-
Legend
park boundary
campsite

During the District Land Use Planning process, several options to change the park boundary were identified. The intent was to alter the existing boundary to include additional areas that would increase the earth and life science representation. The two proposed nature reserve zones, Tabasokwia River and Last Cedar Creek, were designated as Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest and the decision on the boundary change was deferred pending further investigation of these areas. These options are shown in Appendix D.

Guidelines:

-the Geraldton District will explore various options for the maintenance of this remote waterway park. Some of the options under consideration include: 1) hiring and training some of the local residents of Webequie for the job; or, 2) funding a crew that would work out of Geraldton;

-the existing park boundary will remain until a thorough investigation of the proposed changes is completed.

III Recreational Activities

The primary recreational activities in the Winisk River Provincial Park are canoeing, sport fishing and hunting. In addition, the residents of Webequie partake in swimming, recreational boating, camping, berry picking and snowmobiling. Trips down the river to the community of Winisk are common. Outboard motors are commonly used.

Guidelines:

-sport fishing will continue to be a permitted use in this waterway park;

-hunting has been, and will continue to be a permitted use in this park;

-outboard motors will be permitted within the park;

-the use of the park area by the residents of Webequie for recreation will continue;

-use of the park for high quality recreational activities, such as sport fishing and remote canoeing, will be encouraged in order to attract users to the park.

IV Commercial Activities

1. Commercial Tourism

There are five outpost camps along the waterway which are operated by Winisk River Camps from the community of Webequie (see Map No. 3). They cater to sport fishermen and hunters. Guests fly to Webequie then proceed down the river, utilizing each outpost camp for accomodations along the way, or to camp locations along the river (see Appendix B).

The Band Council also provides an outfitting and guide service for parties that wish to travel the waterway. The level of use of both of these commercial activities is not known.

Guidelines:

-commercial tourism will continue to be a permitted use in this Provincial Park;

-no additional tourism development will be permitted pending completion of a management plan;

-existing structures may be reconstructed providing there is no increase in camp capacity. Additional accessory structures like docks or ice houses may be built;

-the camps may only be transferred to another native resident of Webequie;

-aircraft landings will be permitted within the entire park area.

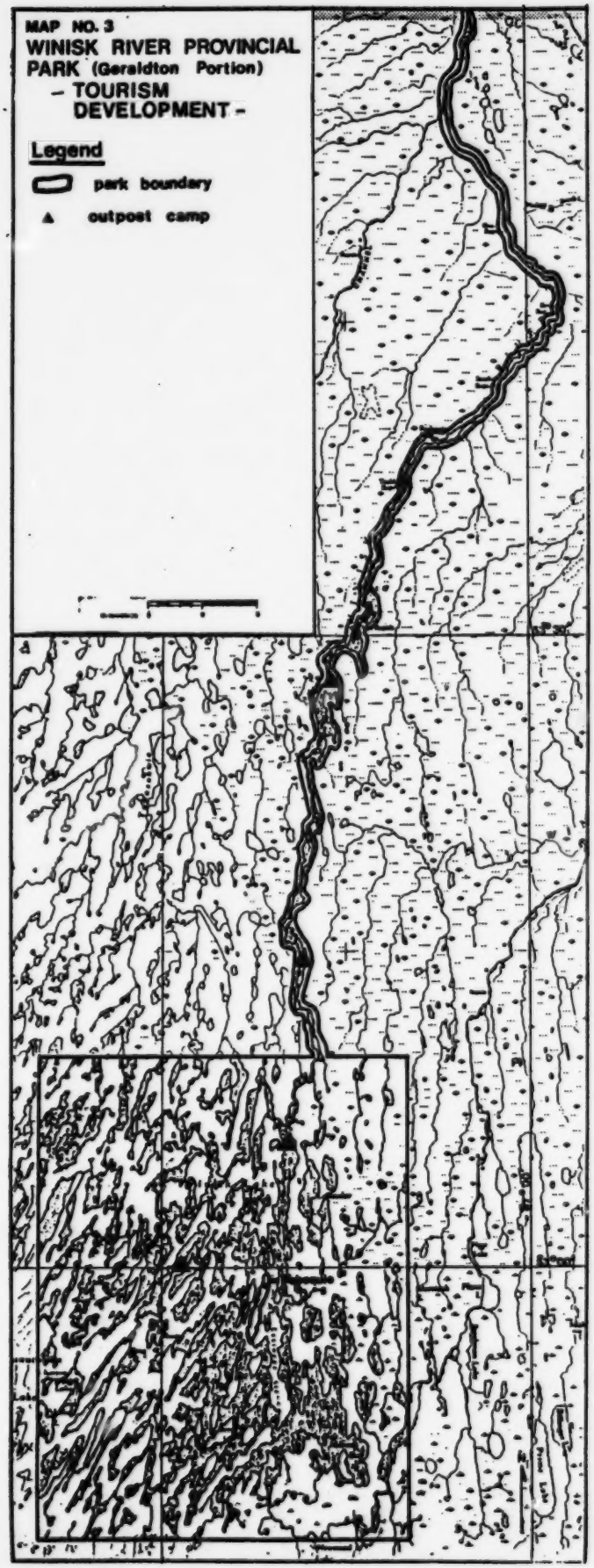
2. Trapping

Portions of 7 traplines are located within Winisk River Provincial Park. They are all operated by the people of Webequie. There is no inventory of trapline cabins in the park area.

Guidelines:

-trapping is a permitted use within this Provincial Park;

-existing trapline cabins are permitted but new developments will be encouraged to locate outside of the park.


MAP NO. 3
WINISK RIVER PROVINCIAL PARK (Geraldton Portion)
– TOURISM DEVELOPMENT –
Legend
park boundary
outpost camp

3. Commercial Fishing

Winisk Lake is licenced for commercial fishing. Existing quotas are: yellow pickerel (26,352 kg.); whitefish (19,764 kg.); and, northern pike (20,587 kg.). Little fishing has been done in recent years.

Guidelines:

-commercial fishing will be a permitted use. Quotas will be based on the best biological information that is available. Greater use of this resource will be encouraged.

4. Mineral Resources

The park area is withdrawn from staking. There are five gravel reserves held by the Ministry of Transportation and Communications (see Map No. 4). These reserves are for the purpose of airport construction and maintenance but it is likely that they have been utilized for community purposes also. Three of these reserves expire in January, 1988, and two expire in April, 1989.

Guidelines:

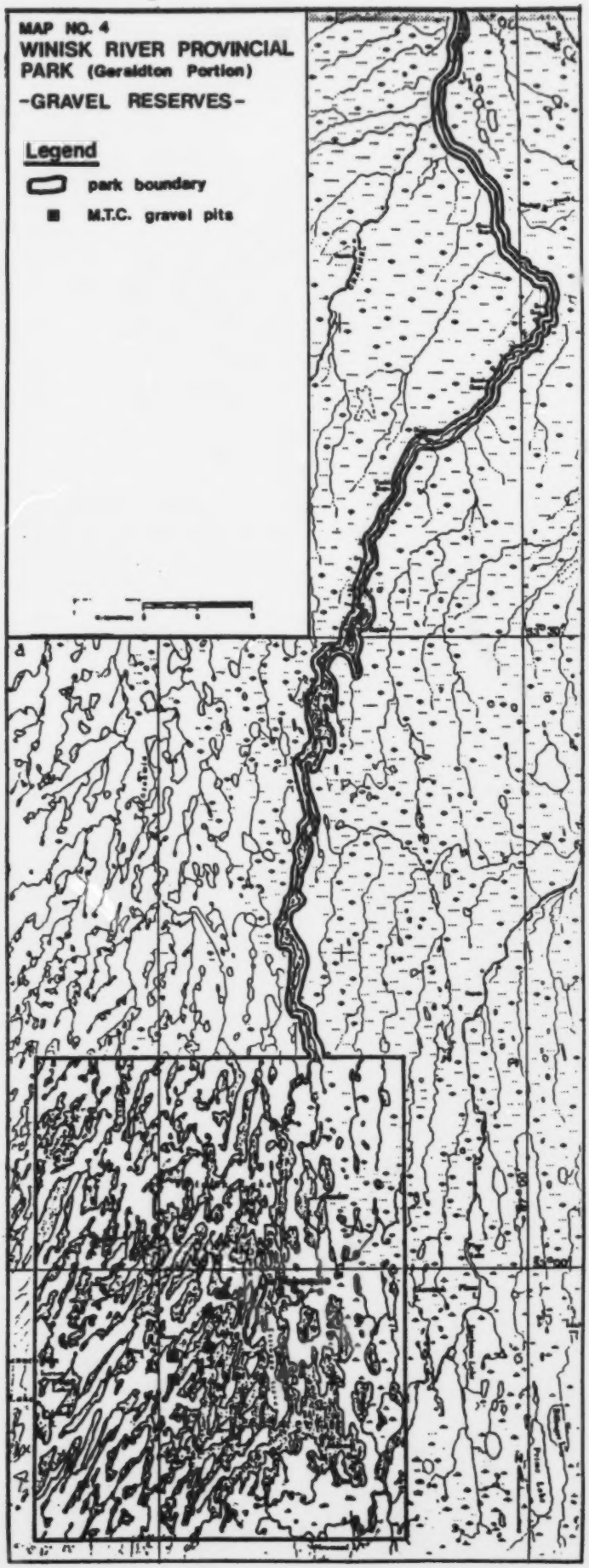
-no mineral exploration will occur within this Provincial Park;

-aggregate extraction will occur in order to maintain the airstrip and to meet community needs. All aggregate will come from the existing five reserves. Should additional sources be required, prospective areas will be carefully checked, to ensure that park values will not be endangered, before a gravel reserve is established;

-restrictions will be placed on quarry and work permits to protect park values.

5. Timber

The trees in this area have little commercial value, but are of importance to the community for both firewood and construction materials. Map No.5 delineates the community wood supply areas.


MAP NO. 4
WINISK RIVER PROVINCIAL PARK (Geraldton Portion)
-GRAVEL RESERVES-
Legend
park boundary
M.T.C. gravel pits

The actual volume of wood utilized each year is not known, but the level of use is thought to be minimal. In addition, the harvesting methods used have little impact on the park environment and aesthetics.

Guidelines:

-timber harvesting for firewood and sawmill logs will be permitted to continue.

V Native Interests

For a number of years the community of Webequie has been seeking reserve status. Legally, they are associated with the Fort Hope Band, but administratively, they are a separate entity.Negotiations for reserve status have been ongoing.

Guidelines:

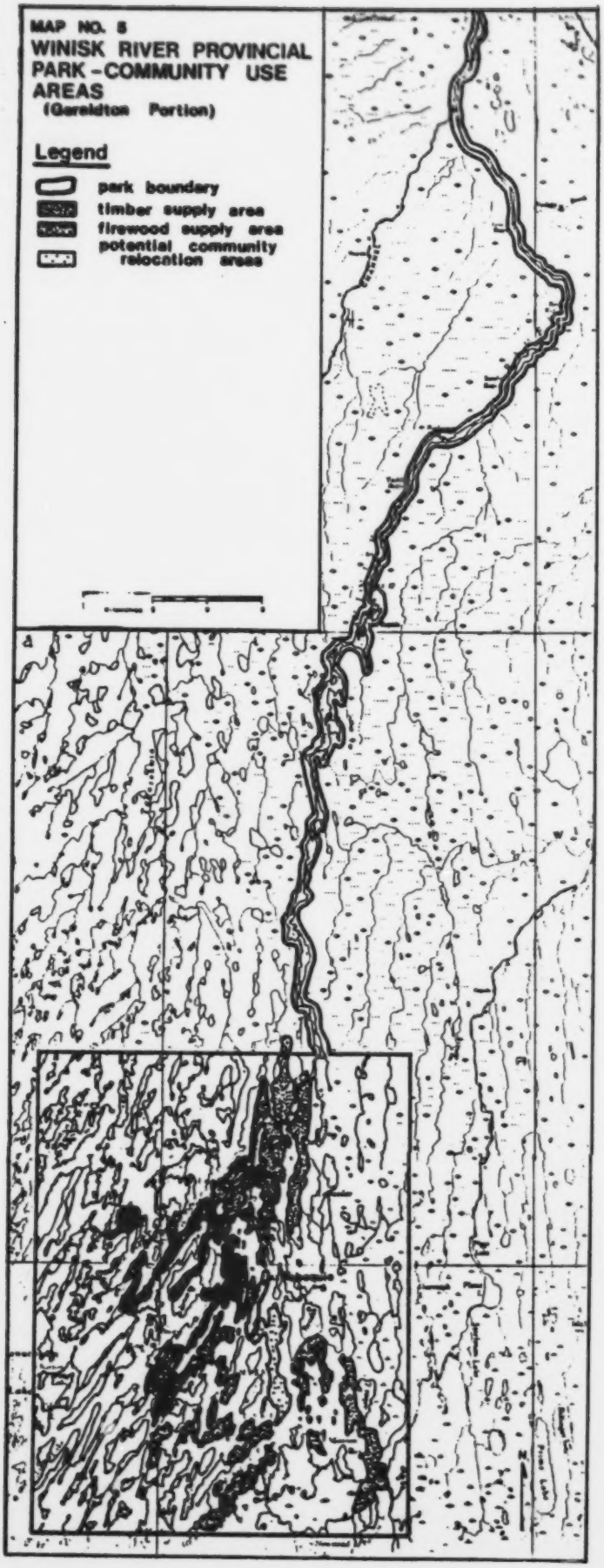
-if the question of reserve status is resolved, the agreed-upon land area would be withdrawn from the park;

-any request for additional area for the community will be assessed at the time. Any land area that is granted for such a request will be withdrawn from the park. Any land area that is no longer required by the Band may be incorporated back into the park;

-environmental assessment and Ministry deregulation procedures for any change to the area of the park, will be followed.

IV Natural and Cultural Resources

One osprey nest has been identified along the waterway. In addition, the river has a sensitive speckled trout population of interest to sports fishermen.


MAP NO. 5
WINISK RIVER PROVINCIAL PARK - COMMUNITY USE AREAS
(Geraldton Portion)
Legend
park boundary
timber supply area
firewood supply area
potential community relocation areas

An archaeological survey was started in 1980 but had to be terminated before it was completed. Four sites have been identified (see Map No. 6).

Guidelines:

-sensitive areas will be recorded and appropriately managed as they are identified;

-the speckled trout population is an important resource in Winisk Waterway Park. Special management techniques such as reduced creel limits, regulated fishing pressure and stocking are options that may be considered. Discussions will be carried out with all interested parties, including the residents of Webequie.

VII Client Services and Marketing

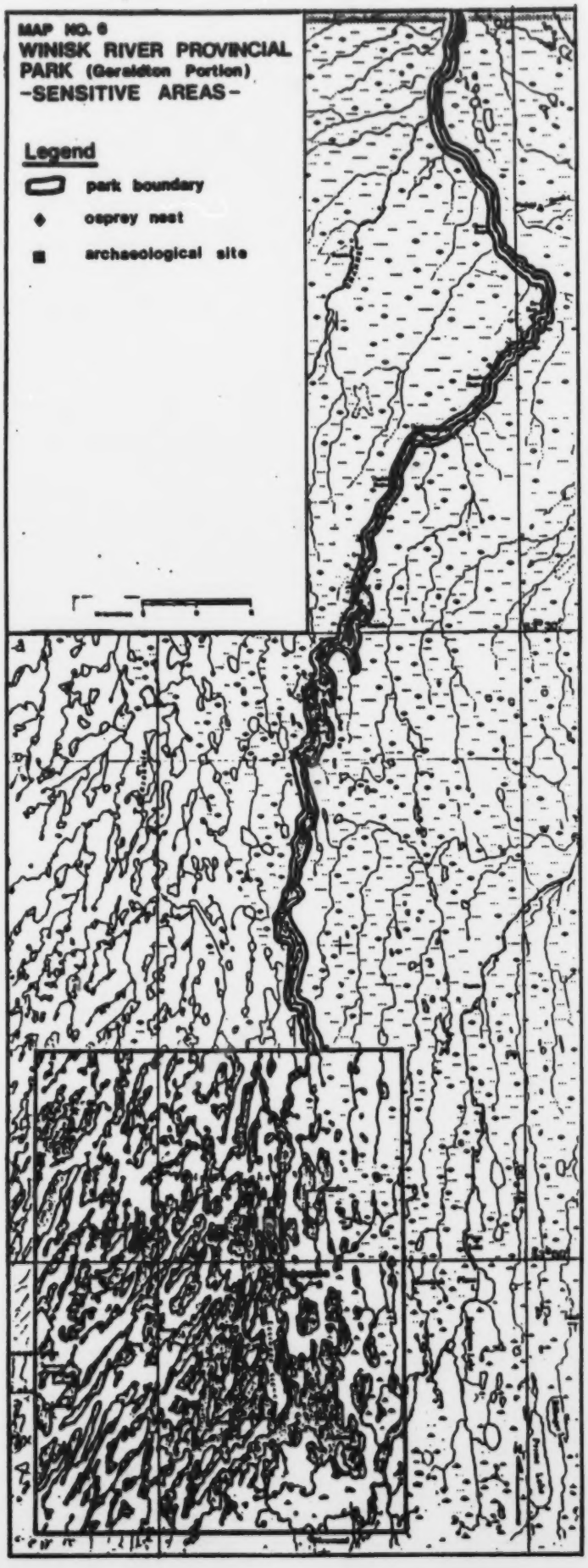
The Geraldton District office handles all public inquiries concerning the Winisk River Waterway Park. A series of maps at a scale of 1 inch equals 1 mile is available to interested canoeists. There is also a canoe route description available to the public.

A questionnaire is sent out with each reply to a public request for information, but very few are returned. Most people do not realize the costs and difficulty involved in reaching the park. Consequently, there is no reliable estimate of park use, but it is thought to be very light.

At the present time, there are no park's staff hired or user fees collected.

Guidelines:

-a survey of the park to determine the condition of portages and campsites, and the extent of the garbage problem (which some people indicated is quite bad) will be carried out. Geraldton District will investigate the various options for achieving this end;


MAP NO. 6
WINISK RIVER PROVINCIAL PARK (Geraldton Portion)
-SENSITIVE AREAS-
Legend
park boundary
osprey nest
archaeological site

-a new canoe route brochure will be prepared based on this new information;

-an information system to determine the actual level of use will be established in co-operation with Moosonee District. This will be an important step for the management planning exercise.

SOURCES/REFERENCES

1. Geraldton District Land Use Guidelines (unreleased); Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 1984.

2. Park Impact Assessment Sheet, Winisk River Provincial Park.

3 Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Culture; Studies in West Patricia Archaeology, Number 3/1980-81, Research Report 19; edited by W.A.Ross, Archaeology and Heritage Branch, 1982.

4. Winisk River Canoe Route Maps; Scale 1"=1 mile.

5. Winisk River Canoe Route Brochure.

6. Ontario Gazette, Ontario Regulation 145/78, s.1, 1978.

7. Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources; Map Nos. G-203, G-242, G-247, G-249, G-257, G-270, G-294, G-301, G-302, G-334, G-339, G-380, G-416, G-423, G-424, G-425; Scale 1"=40 chains; 1981.

8. Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources; Trapline Map, Commercial Tourism Map; Scale 1:250,000; 1984.

9. Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources; Geraldton District Fisheries Management Plan (draft); Geraldton District 1983.

10. Martin, Stuart C.; Report on the River Winisk From Webequie in Winisk Wilderness Provincial Park to Hudson Bay (unpubl.); July, 1978.

11. Community of Webequie Land Use Proposal (hand drawn maps); Dec. 1981.

12. Geraldton District Office Files, 1984.

APPENDIX A: WINISK WATERWAY PARK BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Schedule 75

WINISK RIVER PROVINCIAL PARK

In the Territorial District of Kenora, Patricia Portion containing an area of 670 square miles, more or less, and described as follows:

Beginning at the intersection of longitude 87° 40' with latitude 52° 47'; thence northerly along longitude 87° 40' a distance of 26.5 miles, more or less, to latitude 53° 10'; thence easterly along latitude 53° 10' to a point distant 400 feet measured westerly from and perpendicularly to the high water mark along the westerly bank of the Winisk River; thence in a northeasterly, northerly, easterly and northeasterly direction parallel to the said high water mark and 400 feet in perpendicular distance therefrom to latitude 53° 14'; thence easterly along that latitude to a point distant 400 feet measured easterly from and perpendicularly to the high water mark along the easterly bank of the Winisk River; thence in a southwesterly, westerly, southerly and southwesterly direction parallel to the said high water mark and 400 feet in perpendicular distance therefrom to latitude 53° 10'; thence easterly along latitude 53° 10' to longitude 87° 10'; thence southerly along longitude 87° 10' a distance of 26.5 miles, more or less, to latitude 52° 47'; thence westerly along latitude 52° 47' a distance of 20.8 miles, more or less, to the place of beginning.

Excepting and reserving therefrom that part of the Winisk Indian Reserve No. 90 situated at the junction of the Asheweig River and the Winisk River.

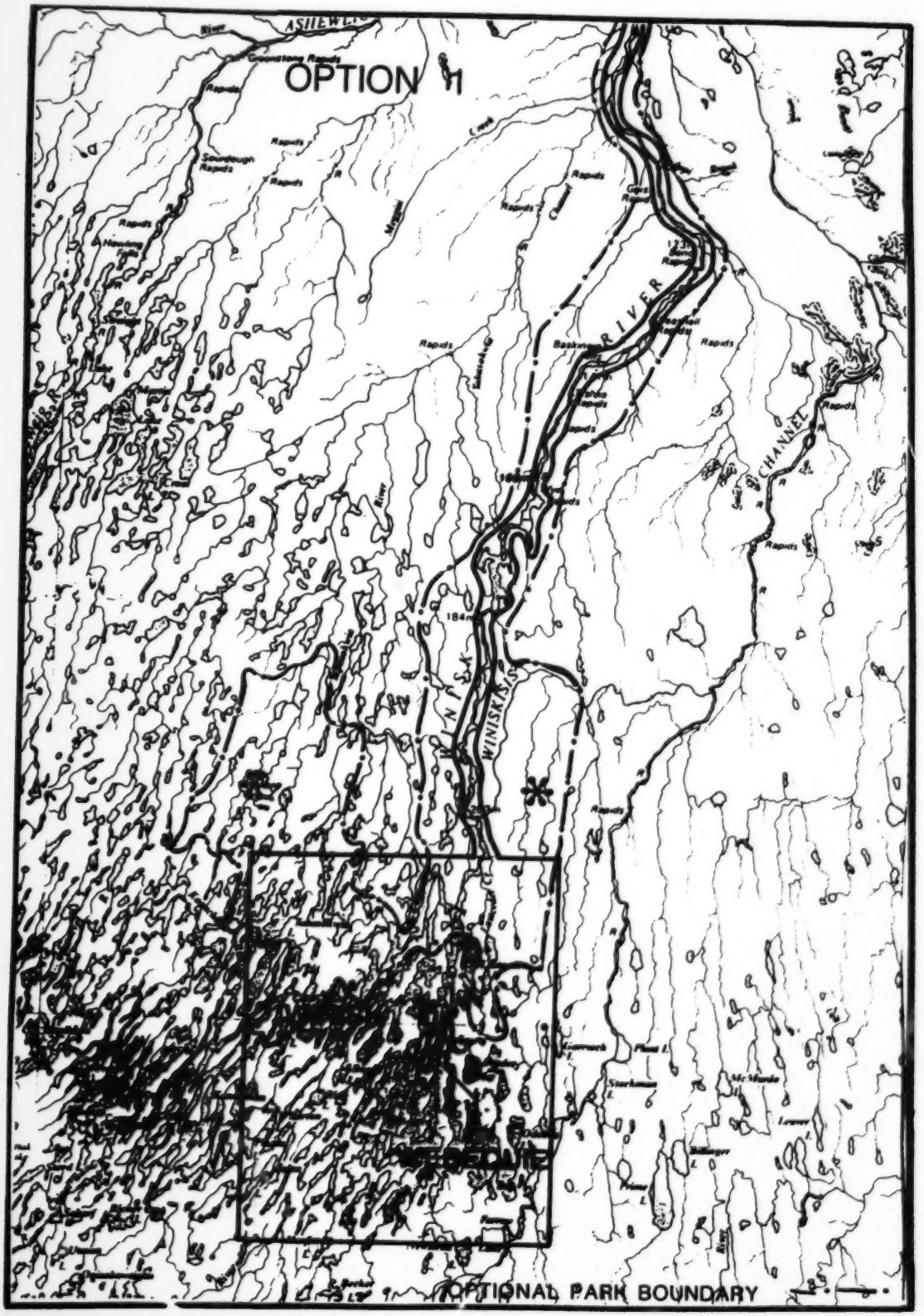
Also excepting therefrom the northwesterly arm of Eastwood Island in Winisk Lake described as follows:

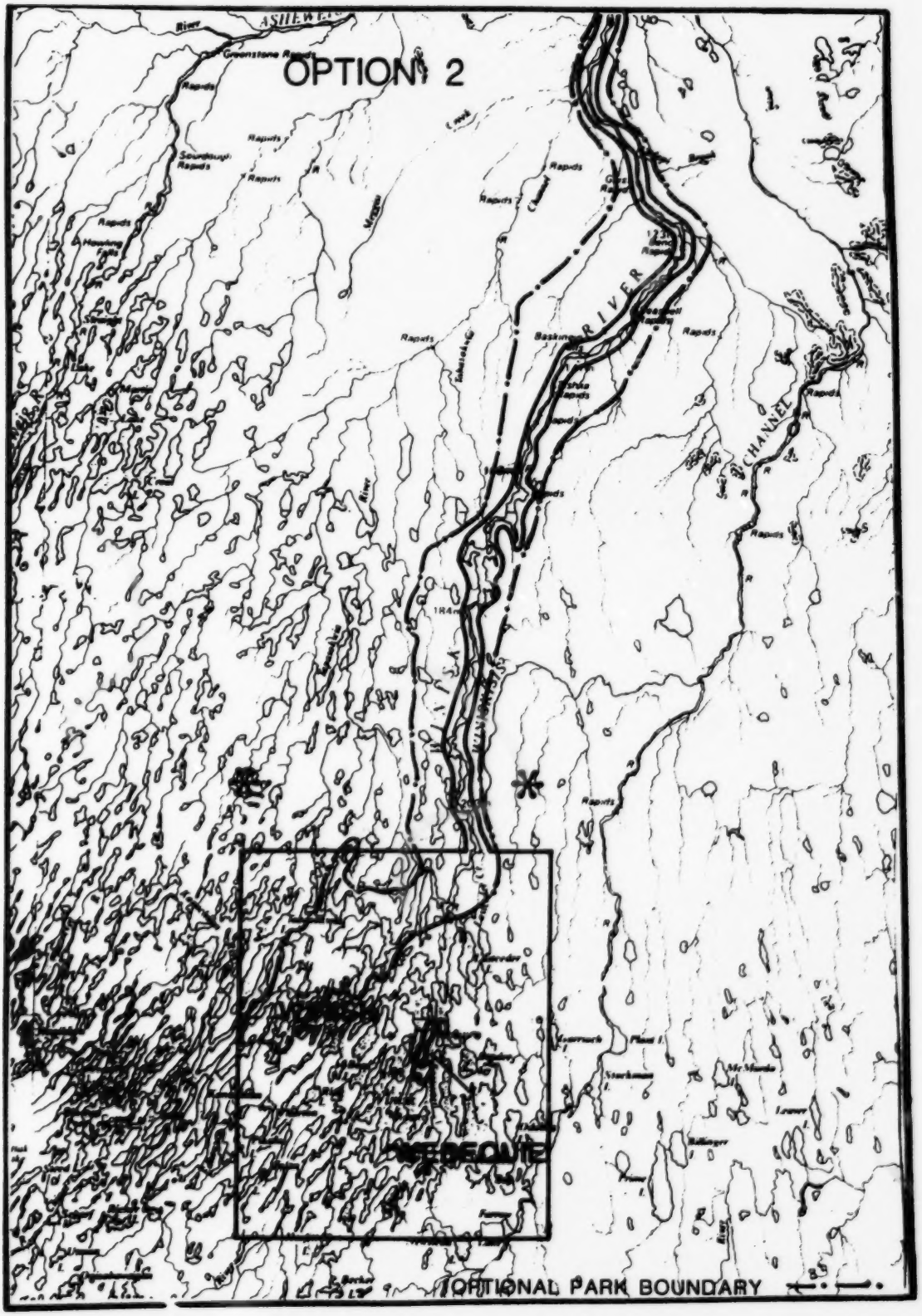
Beginning at the intersection of latitude 52° 57' 00" wit.. longitude 87° 22' 13"; thence south 30° west 2,300 feet more or less to the water's edge of Winisk Lake; thence in a general northeasterly, easterly and southwesterly direction along that water's edge to the place of beginning. O. Reg. 145/78, s. 1.

APPENDIX B: TOURISM USE OF WINISK WATERWAY PARK

Austin Airways
WINISK RIVER
Fishing Connection
Great Speckled Trout
ADVENTURE
5 Day Package $570
(departures Mon., Thurs., Fri.)
Day 1 - A.M., fly to Webequie from Thunder Bay, float fish down Winisk River to Silver Falls Camp.
Day 2 - Float fish downstream to Goose Camp - specks, whitefish, pickerel, pike.
Day 3 - Float fish to Tashka Falls Camp - specks, specks, specks.
Day 4 - Tashka Falls - more specks.
Day 5 - Fish A.M., Fly by float plane (50 miles) back to Webequie to catch Austin Airways flight to Thunder Bay.
*Includes return airfare from Thunder Bay, one guide per 2 fishermen, use of outpost camps, boats, motors, gas, float plane flight from Tashka Falls to Webequie.
Call Austin Airways 577-1166

APPENDIX D; OPTIONAL PARK BOUNDARIES


OPTION 11
RIVER
CHANNEL
WINISKIS
OPTIONAL PARK BOUNDARY


OPTION 2
RIVER
CHANNEL
OPTIONAL PARK BOUNDARY